



**Assemblée des Premières Nations
Québec-Labrador**

250, Place Chef Michel Laveau, bureau 201
Wendake (Québec) G0A 4V0
Tél. : 418-842-5020 • Téléc. : 418-842-2660
www.apnql-afnql.com

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**PRESS RELEASE
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**RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION: A SURVEY ENCOURAGES THE AFNQL
TO COUNT ON THE SUPPORT OF QUEBECERS TO BRING ABOUT REAL
CHANGE**

Montreal, August 12, 2020 - The Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador (AFNQL) announces that it is developing its own action plan to address discrimination and racism. The results of the Léger survey motivate the AFNQL to create a space for dialogue with the Quebec population and to invite allies to implement concrete solutions.

The survey, conducted by the firm Léger between July 17 and 23, 2020, confirms the progress made in recent years in terms of Quebecers' opinion of First Nations. Almost all Quebecers recognize the reality of racism or discrimination experienced by First Nations and a very large majority of them support the positions of First Nations in this regard.

Given the strength of these results, the AFNQL wishes to give an important place to allies in its plan to fight racism and discrimination currently under development. This action plan will be made public by the end of September 2020.

"We see that the days when First Nations were considered as privileged are clearly over. The opinion of Quebecers has greatly evolved, and the survey confirms that they are much more sensitive to the racism experienced by First Nations than their political representatives. Quebecers are also more open to dialogue and the search for real solutions," said Ghislain Picard, Chief of the AFNQL.

Little inspired by the action group

If the AFNQL has decided to adopt its own plan, it is also because it is little inspired by the action group against racism created by the Legault government. Composed solely of members of the party in power, this committee has little credibility in the eyes of First Nations leaders.

The fact that Premier Legault has publicly stated that he does not believe in "systemic racism" reinforces the AFNQL's position. "Systemic racism, structural discrimination, whatever you want to call it, this is a reality, and we must face it with the necessary means.

This is what we are going to tackle right now by inviting the people of Quebec to lead a real fight against racism experienced by our populations," said Chief Picard.

Already known solutions

Moreover, the creation of a new committee and yet another consultation are proofs of the Quebec government's lack of will to act. The AFNQL recalls that the issue has been the subject of many consultations over the past few years and that several avenues for solutions have been presented, notably in the context of the Public Inquiry Commission on relations between Indigenous Peoples and certain public services in Québec (Viens Commission), whose report was made public on September 30, 2019.

In addition to the Viens Commission, actions to counter racism and discrimination against First Nations are also presented in the reports of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG, 2019), the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC, 2015), and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007).

"The AFNQL believes that it will be impossible for Premier Legault's government to turn a blind eye to our initiative. It must commit to correcting the situations of systemic and structural racism and discrimination, which it is often the source of, and which remain major obstacles to the social justice to which everyone is entitled," concluded Chief Picard.

SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

Among non-Indigenous Quebecers who have an opinion of First Nations in Quebec, this opinion is good in eight out of ten cases (81%). However, most Quebecers :

- Admit that they have little or no knowledge of the issues and realities of First Nations in Quebec (58%).
- Consider that the relations that non-Indigenous Quebecers have with First Nations in Quebec are poor (53%).
- Almost all non-Indigenous Quebecers (92%) think that First Nations are subject to racism or discrimination in Quebec.
- 80% of respondents consider that First Nations people face additional obstacles in the different facets of their lives.
- 70% of those who have an opinion are of the opinion that, currently in Quebec, First Nations are not treated on the same footing as non-Indigenous Quebecers in social structures.
- 91% of respondents believe that the Quebec government has an important role to play in achieving and maintaining equality between First Nations and non-Indigenous Quebecers.

The press conference will be broadcasted live on the Facebook page APNQL – AFNQL at <https://www.facebook.com/APNQL/live/>

The full report of the survey can be found at www.apnql.com

About the AFNQL

The Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador is the regional political organization that brings together 43 First Nations Chiefs in Quebec and Labrador. Follow the AFNQL on Twitter @APNQL.

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**INFORMATION,
ACCREDITATION AND
INTERVIEW REQUESTS**

Justine Germain
Media Relations Manager
Cellular: 514-262-3461
jgermain@acosysconsulting.com

Melanie Vincent
Executive Assistant to the Chief of
the AFNQL
Cellular: 418-580-4442
communications@apnql.com